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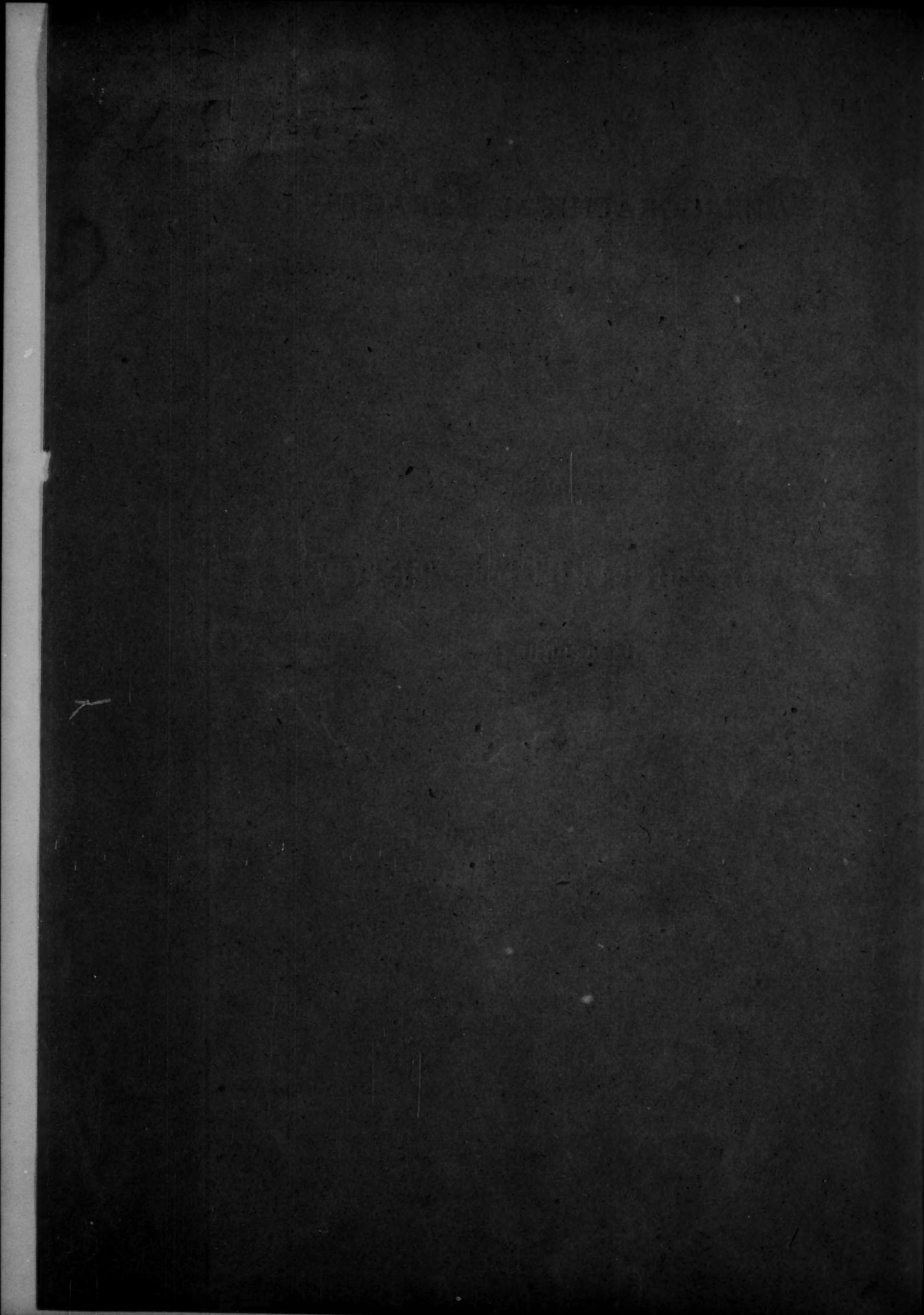


BIBLIOGRAPHICAL TRACTS.

NUMBER ONE. all pub^d



[865]



BIBLIOGRAPHICAL TRACTS.

NUMBER ONE.

Spurious Reprints of Early Books.

by
Charles Deane



BOSTON.

1865.

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SPURIOUS REPRINTS OF EARLY BOOKS.

"SALEM WITCHCRAFT: comprising *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, collected by ROBERT CALEF; and *Wonders of the Invisible World*, by COTTON MATHER; together with Notes and Explanations, by SAMUEL P. FOWLER. Boston: William Veazie. MDCCCLXV." 4to. pp. 450.



HIS is a very imposing volume, with charming paper and type, and with "a neat rivulet of text" gracefully "meandering through a meadow of margin," such as would have contented the heart of Sir Benjamin Backbite himself. The beautifully executed wood-cut on the title-page appropriately represents a withered hag, supported by her staff, and mak-

ing her way by dim moonlight over a blasted heath, her only companion a black cat; while in the distance, coursing through the air on a broomstick, is seen another of the "weird sisters," on her way, perhaps, to an appointed "witch meeting," to plot mischief against some peaceful hamlet. Possibly our young friends who are fresh from their nursery classics might suggest that the old woman on the broomstick was bound on a more humane mission:—

"'Old woman,' said I,
‘O whither, O whither, O whither so high?’—
‘To sweep the cobwebs from the sky.’"

From whatever cause, or by whatever agency, certainly a good many cobwebs have been cleared away from our horizon since the days of the Salem witchcraft.

And here I am reminded of an anecdote of Chief Justice Holt, before whom an

old woman was once brought, accused of witchcraft. The evidence against her was, that she had been seen to ride through the air on a broomstick. "Well, my good woman," said the humane Judge to the demented old creature, "did you ride on a broomstick through the air, as the witnesses say?" "Yes, sir," replied the accused, supposing that what everybody said must be true. "And I know of no law against it," said the Judge, who immediately discharged the prisoner. Judge Holt's judicial broom swept away a great many cobwebs.

This book, of which an edition of one hundred copies, on sumptuous large paper, has just been issued, was printed from the stereotype plates of a work issued in 1861, in duodecimo, by a publisher in a neighboring city. As we have seen by the general

title quoted above, it purports to be a reprint of Robert Calef's "More Wonders of the Invisible World," first published in 1700, and of Cotton Mather's "Wonders of the Invisible World," first published in 1692. The special title prefixed to the latter imports that it is a reprint of "The Third Edition," London, 1693. These two works — of Mather and of Calef — are among the most important of those which relate to the history of the Salem delusion.

I wish I could say that the real merit of this elegant volume is equal to the fair promise with which it greets the eye. But such is far from being the case. The first work (which, in order, should have been the last) is a reprint of Calef's book, which, as I have said, was first issued in 1700, and in London. It was afterwards three times

separately reprinted, namely, twice at Salem, in 1796 and in 1823, and once at Boston, in 1828. All these reprints are full of errors, each later publisher copying them from the previous one. The publisher of the edition of 1796, who printed from the original London edition, appears never to have seen, or at least not to have heeded, a table of *errata* inserted in it, and therefore to have reprinted most of those errors as well as others not noticed in that table, besides making many new ones of his own. These, for the most part, have been perpetuated in the next two editions, and are now sumptuously served up to us anew on tinted paper in the volume before us. The editor of it evidently never saw the first edition of Calef, but has printed from one of the two later. For the benefit of the purchasers of these “one hundred copies,”

and of all other persons “whom it may concern,” I will note some of the variations from the true text.

In the first place, the special title-page to Calef’s book is wrongly punctuated. The second clause is not “The Wonders of the Invisible World displayed. | In Five Parts.” It is “The Wonders of the Invisible World, | Display’d in Five Parts.” Again, under “Part I.” on the title-page of the original London edition, the name of Cotton Mather does not appear in full, as it does in this volume, but simply “C. M.” Both of these variations first appeared in the edition of 1823. Now let us examine, in the volume before us, “The Epistle to the Reader, and more especially to the Noble Barons of this age, wherever residing.” Whom does the editor suppose Calef could have intended

by “the noble *barons*”? A reference to the first edition, the author’s edition, would have shown him that Calef’s appeal is “to the Noble *Bereans* of this Age”; namely, those who search the Scriptures and base their faith upon its teachings. (See *The Acts of the Apostles*, xvii. 10, 11.) On page xxi. of the Epistle to the Reader, line 2, the true reading is not “communicated to *use*,” but communicated to *me

and to the date “August 11, 1697,” on the same page, should be prefixed “Boston in New England.” After the Preface, or Epistle to the Reader, in the first edition there follows a valuable “Index” of three pages, which is omitted in all the subsequent editions, and of course in this. At the beginning of the first part or section, on page 25 of this new volume, the word and numeral “Part I.,” which should*

immediately precede "Section I.," are wanting, as well as the subject of that part, namely, "The Afflictions of Margaret Rule," which should immediately follow; and this heading, somewhat varied, is wrongly prefixed to the preceding prefatory letter of Mather. The most of the changes relating to the heading of this and the other chapters or "Parts" first appeared in the edition of 1823. But the principal alterations in the structure of the paragraphs, as well as the greater part of all the errors and omissions here noticed, originally appeared in the edition of 1796. On page 32, line 4, of our new edition, "a white" should be "a Wight." On page 51, line 1, Cotton Mather is made to speak of the "fruitful discharge of my ministry." A reference to the *errata* of the first edition shows this to be

(what the intelligent reader might have suspected) "the faithful discharge of my ministry." Page 62, line 5, "intimated to me" should be "intimated to Mr. J. M." Page 65, line 1, "drowning of witches" should be "chaining of witches." Page 80, line 2 from the bottom, "to leave" should be "leaving." Page 86, line 23, *dele* "More." Page 87, lines 17, 18, and 19; the quoted passage, as here given, makes nonsense. In Calef's original edition it is by no means clear; but an intelligent editor, by referring to the book which Calef is here citing, would find the whole intelligible. The passage should read: "There is in Spain a sort of people called Zahurs, that can see into the bowels of the earth, on Tuesdays and Fridays"; but on no other days was the power vouchsafed to them. Page 115, line 3,

"And thus, reverend," should be "And thus, Reverend Sir." Page 142, line 18, "unaccountable" should be "uncomfortable." Page 157, line 18, after the word "propose," the next paragraph below, beginning with "That of yourselves," &c., should immediately follow, as a part of the sentence ending with "time and place." Page 160, line 14, "proved" should be "procured." Page 175, line 14, after "divination," add "*(πνεῦμα Πύθωνος)*," and in line 18, after "soothsaying," add *μαντευομένη*, and omit the words which follow in the next line, namely, "till they were full of the god," as these words are not to be found in the original edition. They are a translation, strangely misplaced, of the Latin words, "*donec erant Deo plenæ*," which should come in after "uttered" in the 21st line, but which are wanting in all but the

first edition. Without a reference to the volume itself, it is difficult for the reader of this notice to realize the miserable jumble on this single page, occasioned by the omissions and interpolations of the careless and ignorant editor of the first reprint; all of which variations have been faithfully reproduced in every subsequent edition. Page 176, line 14, after "known," add "(Non est Religio ubi omnia patent.)" Page 190, line 7, "I proposed" should be "I did promise you." Page 211, line 10, "we may at least learn" should be "we may best learn." Page 226, line 12, "March 9th" should be "March 19th." Page 233, line 13, "Mary Lewis" should be "Mercy Lewis." Page 242, line 5, "Jonathan Cary" should be "Nathaniel Cary." Page 262, line 3, "the cart going to the hill," should read, "the cart going

up the hill." On page 336, in the last line, it is stated that a woman and her daughter, on being a second time accused, "*flew* into New York government." They were hardly witches enough for that; they only "*fled*." But I will pursue this collation no further. These specimens will serve the intended purpose.

The foot-notes to this edition of Calef, which are of little value, bear no distinguishing mark; so that the ordinary reader is never able to tell who made them, and rarely when they were made. The account at the end, about Giles Cory, was not published by Calef, neither was it furnished by the editor of the present volume. It appeared for the first time in the edition of 1823.

We come now to the second tract in this volume,—Mather's "Wonders of the

Invisible World." I have made no collation of this with the tract from which it is printed, to test its *verbal* accuracy; but I am astonished to find that the editor should have omitted, from the body of the work, about twenty-four pages, being the relation of the trials of persons for witchcraft. A note at the place of this omission, page 430, would seem to intimate that it was made because the same matter had been already printed in the Calef tract. This, however, is no sufficient excuse for destroying the integrity of a book. But there is a more serious ground of complaint. The editor should have printed from the author's edition of this work,—the Boston edition, or the first London edition, which is a reprint of that; since "The Third Edition," the one he has used, is only an abridgment. What com-

prises more than fifty pages of the first London reprint, and more than one hundred pages of the smaller-sized original Boston edition, printed under Mather's own eye, is wanting in this third edition. If we add to this the portion which the editor of the new volume has omitted from this third edition, we have but a fragment left to us here of Mather's original work.

Now we submit whether an infliction of this nature upon the literary community is not simply monstrous. "It is most tolerable and not to be endured." That a person should attempt to reproduce an old book, or to reprint it in any form, without consulting the original edition, or the author's last edition, if he had published more than one, when all of them were accessible, is evidence that, as an editor, he

but faintly realized his duty. The fact that the volume we have just described is published here in the heart of New England, and finds ready purchasers, is an alarming indication; and this leads to another reflection.

It probably matters but little to three fourths of the purchasers of this volume, or of others which the press is so rapidly throwing off, whether they are correctly edited or not. It would seem as if nobody but a few plodders reads anything now-a-days save newspapers and pamphlets. Books are sold in large quantities; but are they bought to be read? The quiet satire of Dibdin, on the Bibliomaniac, may not be wholly inapplicable to others, "here and now." "'I will frankly confess,' rejoined Lysander, 'that I am an arrant Bibliomaniac,—that I love books dearly,—that the very

sight, touch, and, more, the perusal—’ ‘Hold, my friend,’ again exclaimed Philemon, ‘you have renounced your profession,—you talk of *reading* books,—do Bibliomaniacs ever read books?’” Many persons buy books as they buy upholstery, for the eye, not for the mind. “Put me down,” says Jones, “for a copy of all your large papers, whatever you publish.” The press is stimulated to produce what has already been sold in advance; and, in a bookselling affair, what inducement is there to secure that care which would be necessary where a book has to be sold upon its merits.

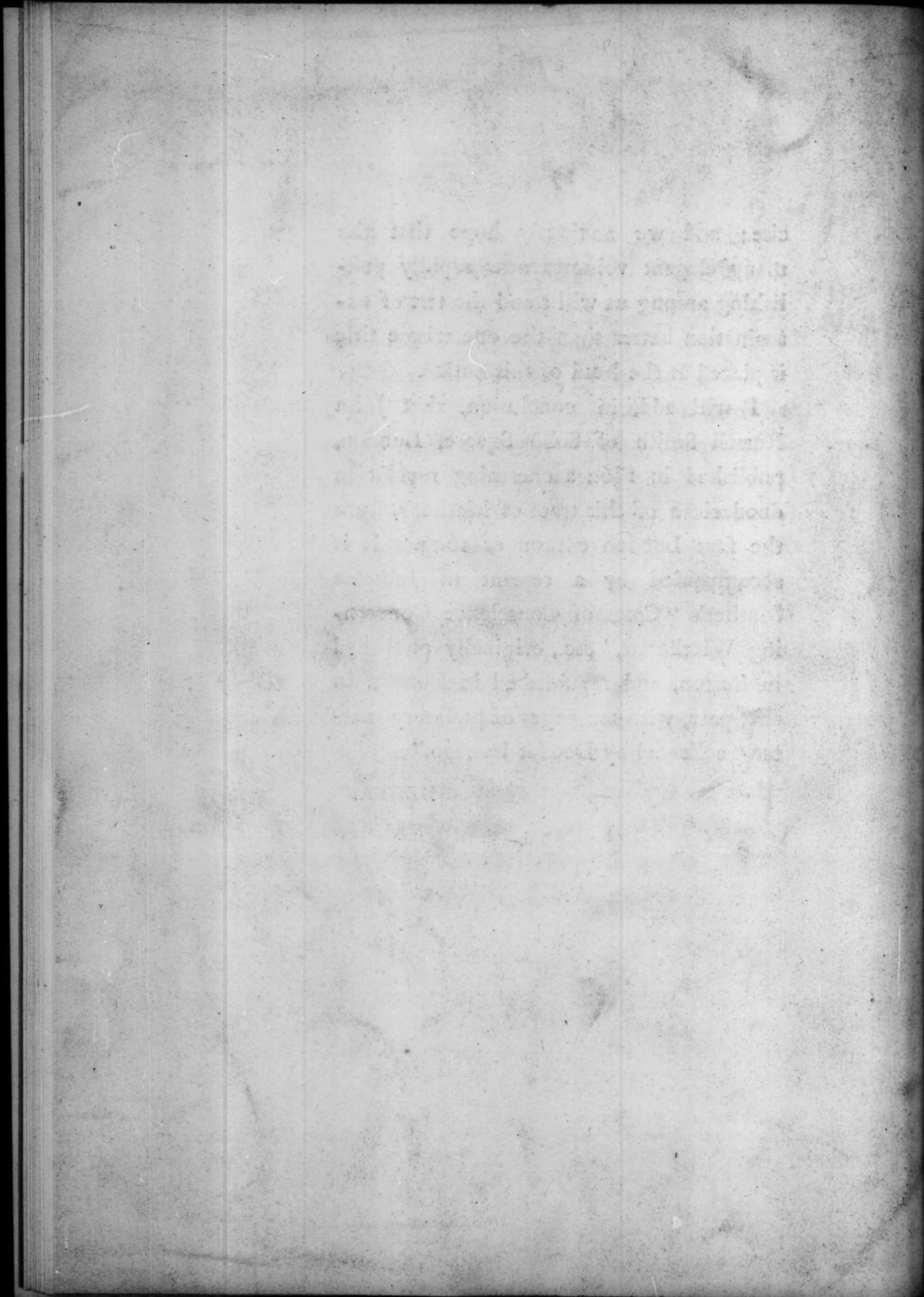
But these books will by and by fall into the hands of readers. “When the hurly-burly’s done,” and quiet times succeed the present excited state of the public mind, we shall find leisure to read and to criti-

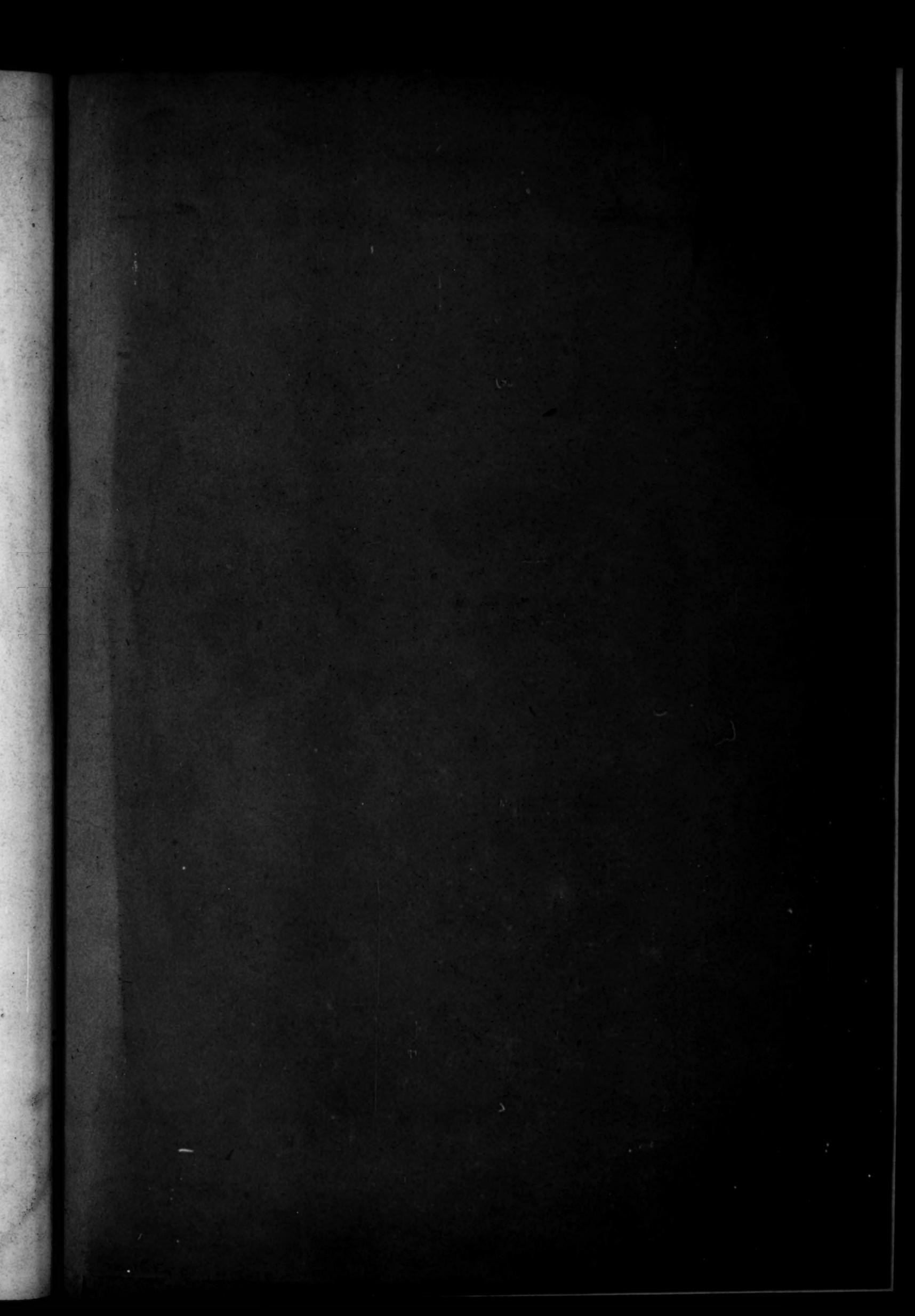
cise; and we anxiously hope that the many elegant volumes now rapidly publishing among us will stand the test of examination better than the one whose title is placed at the head of this notice.

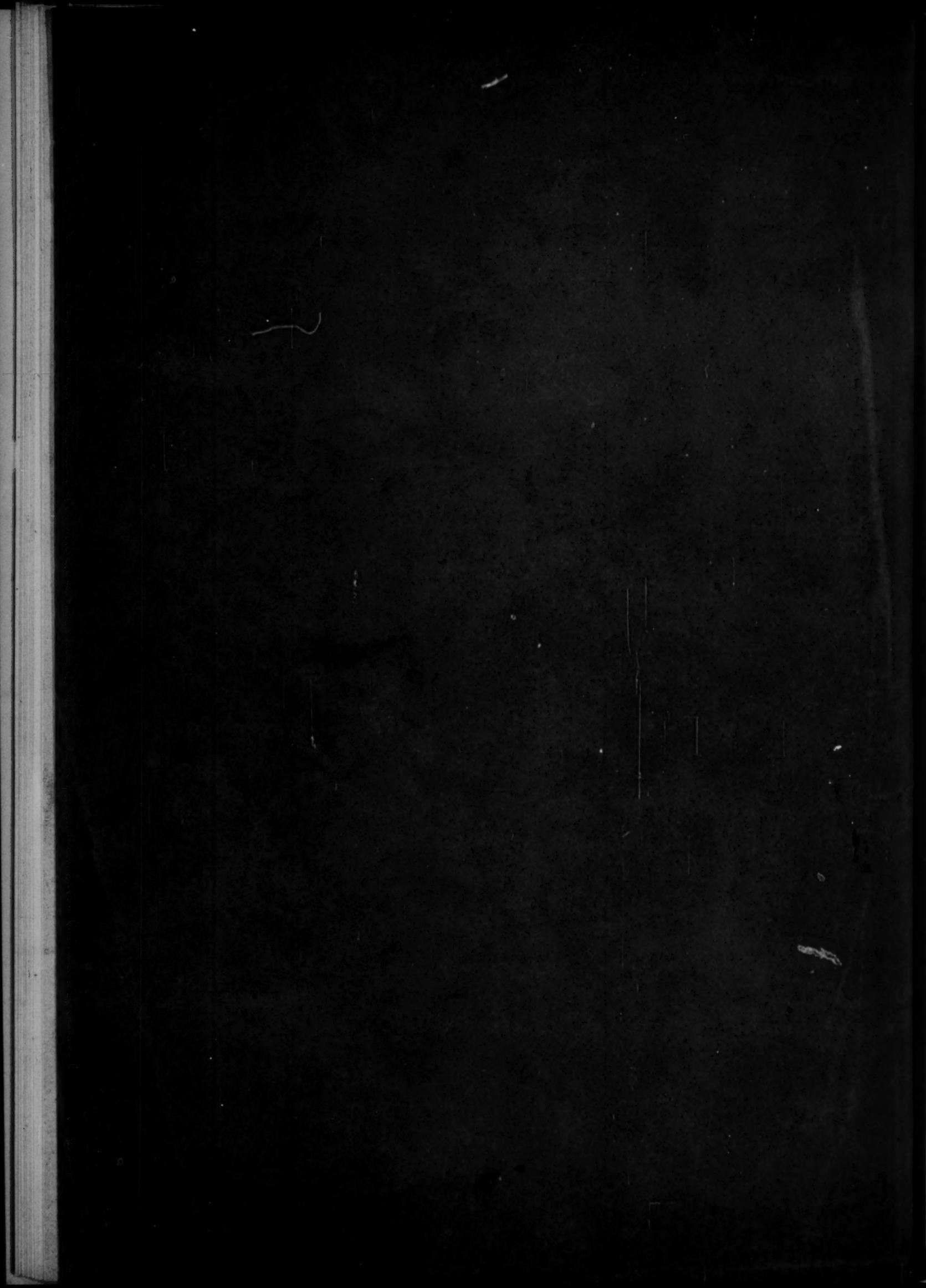
I will add, in conclusion, that John Russell Smith of Soho Square, London, published in 1862 a charming reprint in duodecimo of this tract of Mather's, from the first London edition of 1693. It is accompanied by a reprint of Increase Mather's "Cases of Conscience Concerning Witchcraft," &c., originally published in Boston, and republished in London in that year, with ten pages of prefatory matter "collected by Deodat Lawson."

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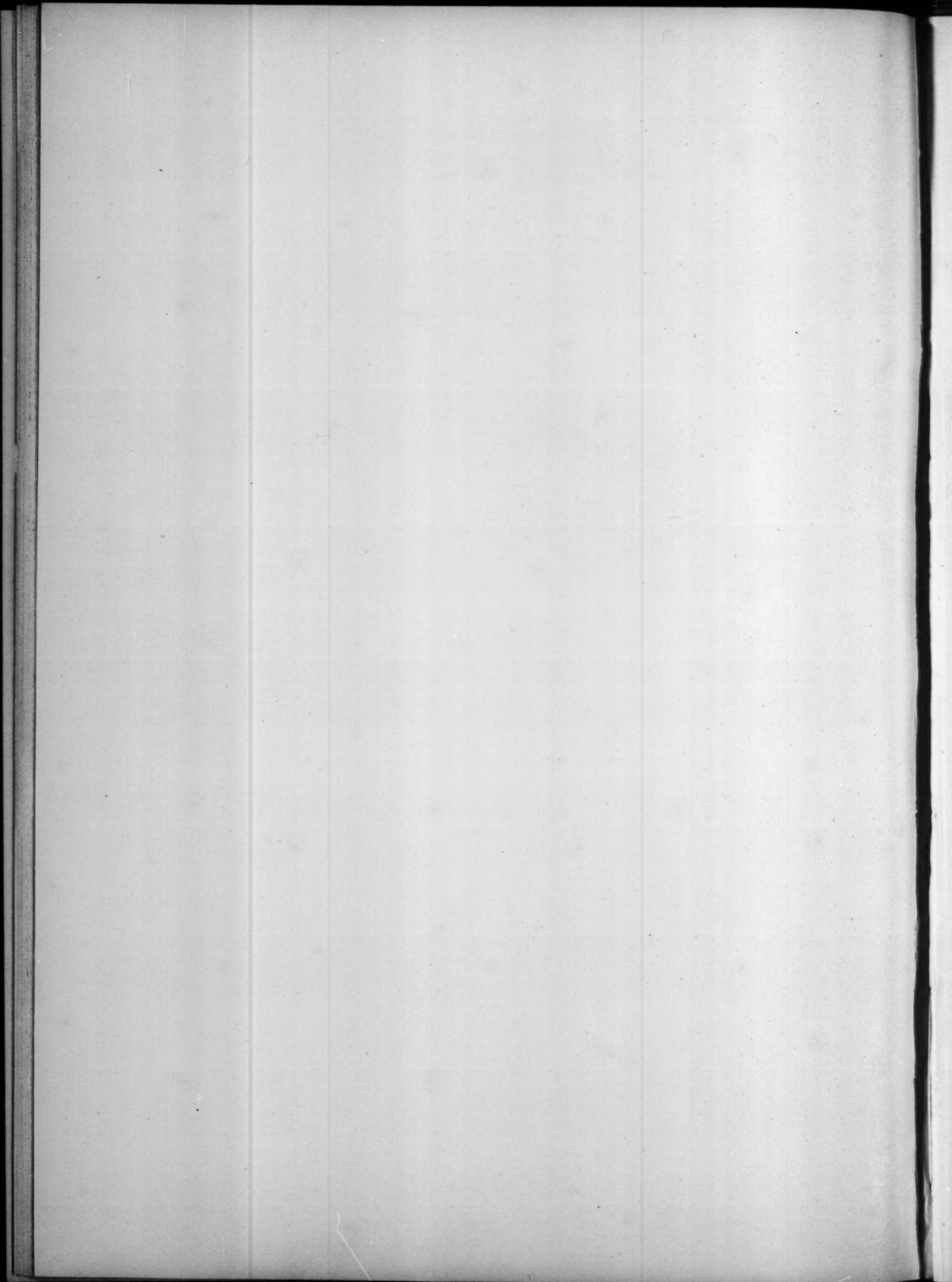












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